pleased to state:

(a) whether an Advisory Committee appointed by the Government to go into the issues relating to treatment of agriculture at par with industry has submitted its report; and

(b) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI MULLAPALLY RAMACHANDRAN): (a) and (b). Yes, Sir.

The Committee has made a large number of recommendations on farm price policy, alternative Food Security System, new strategy for greater production, incomes and employment, export of farm products, better use of land and water resources and declaring agriculture as an industry. As regards, treatment of agriculture at par with industry, the Committee has observed that "so long as agriculture is given the same facilities and incentives as industry and similar norms, standards and criteria are applied in the domain like fixation of prices, budgetary allocations, credit, power, transport and export facilities, it is of little consequence whether any formalised status is given to agriculture or not. However, if well-established and pronounced bias against agriculture cannot be corrected by Government policies and programmes, without according it the formal status of industry, the Committee recommends that agriculture be declared as industry."

[*English*]

Procurement Price for Paddy and Wheat

1245. SHRI PAWAN KUMAR BANSAL:
SHRI DATTATRAYA BANDARU:

Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) the procurement prices fixed for wheat and paddy;

(b) the reasons for disparity in their procurement prices;

(c) whether the States of Punjab and Haryana have objected to the fixation of low prices for such procurement;

(d) if so, the main grounds of their objection; and

(e) the action taken thereon?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE(SHRI MULLAPALLY RAMACHANDRAN):(a) The procurement/minimum support prices for the 1991-92 marketing season are Rs. 225 per quintal for wheat and Rs. 230 per quintal for common paddy.

(b) The Commission for Agricultural Costs and Prices (CACP) recommends minimum support prices for wheat and paddy after considering the economics each crop taking into account relevant factors like cost of production, changes in input prices, input-output price parity, trends in market prices, demand and supply situation, inter-crop price parity, effect on industrial cost structure, effect on general price level, effect on cost of living, international market situation and parity between prices paid and prices received by farmers.

(c) to (e). The State Government of Haryana and Punjab recommended higher support prices than those recommended by the CACP on the basis of their own assessment of higher cost of production in the two states. The Government have fixed the support prices after considering the recommendations of the CACP and the views also of State Governments including those of Punjab and Haryana.

[*Translation*]

Oil Exploration in Central Areas

1246. SHRI GIRDHARI LAL BHARGAVA: Will the Minister of